

**Loudoun County Public Schools
Special Education Advisory Committee
Wednesday, October 2, 2019 - 6:00pm**

Chair - Sharon Tropf

Vice Chair of Membership - Heidi Bunkua

Vice Chair of Communication – Craig Metz

Vice Chair of Planning – Shehnaz Khan

Immediate Past Chair – Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson

Secretary – Kathryn Rosenbrook

Attendees: A quorum of SEAC voting members was confirmed with Vice Chair of Membership with 11 out of 13 members present.

I. Welcome and Introduction

- a. Meeting was called to order at 7:17 pm

II. Review Previous Meeting Minutes -No minutes from September as this was a training session.

III. Public Comments -One comment regarding children who struggle with sensory issues who are not identified as students with special education needs. The parent asked for more training/information be offered to staff to meet those needs.

IV. Reports and Updates

A. Chair.

- Annual Report- Dr. Carol Williams-Nickelson Reviewing survey,
- LCPS School Board Proclamation of October as Disability History Awareness Month, banners and the Proclamation have been posted in every school,
- Governor Northam declared October Dyslexia Awareness Month.
- Bias Letter regarding LLI Reading Instruction Materials: SEAC Executive Board issued a letter to the School Board and Administration regarding resent publication of biased reading materials, a review committee has been put together with requests for 3 members from SEAC and MSAAC to participate in a materials review.
- State SEAC Report Review

B. Executive Committee.

- New secretary Katie Rosenbrook

C. Membership.

- Heidi Bunkua - PTA/PTO 41 schools have SEAC Representatives
- SEAC Membership currently 13, 8 open positions, 1 application sent to Dr. Nelson to present to the School Board

D. Communication.

- Craig Metz - Social media has been updated for all accounts to have consistent naming,
- A checklist for meeting planning has been created to assist with FOIA compliance

E. Planning.

- Shehnaz Khan – Reviewed upcoming meetings for SEAC Executive Committee and Business meeting, joint Meeting with MSAAC, Flyers will be available for presentations

F. School Board Liaison-Chris Croll (Attached)

G. Dept of Pupil Services.

- Dr. Asia Jones, Assistant Superintendent of Pupil Services - Restraint and Seclusion Annual Report
 - a) Policy 5345 Report on seclusion and restraint and the training of staff involved.
 - b) Multi-Tiered System of Supports-universal for all students.
 - c) Restraint/seclusion is used as last resort, annual training for employees, documentation of use, UKERU, MANDT, definitions of restraint.
 - d) Answered questions from audience involving specific instances.

H. Dept of Special Education.

- Dr. Patricia Nelson, Director of Special Education
- Credit Accommodations - locally awarded verified credit, SOL score 375-399.
- VDOE another alternative pathway for a standard diploma, must show competency, more opportunity to earn standard diploma.

I. Subcommittees Formation will begin at the November 6 meeting

J. Parent Resource Services.

- Pamela Spiering and Leanne Kidwell - 3 new workshops/presentations, flyers available at the meeting

K. School Board Liaison.

- Chris Croll (See Attached)

L. Business

- Policy Subcommittee
- Policy Review and Recommendations (Discussion/Action) Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability for all Students, Proposed Policy 8040
Unanimous approval of recommendations
- Disciplinary Procedures for Students with Disabilities, Proposed Policy 5344
Motion made to table until the next meeting.

M. Adjourn 9:33

Notes from VDOE Presentation-Hank Millward:

The Role of SEAC in Identifying Unmet Needs, Presented by Hank Millward, Office of Specialized Education Facilities and Family Engagement, Division of Special Education and Student Services, Virginia Department of Education

Membership-who serves. Roles are set by local by-laws. The parents should run the committee,

Functions-Advisory committee, participate in development of priorities and strategies, submit periodic reports and recommendations, assist division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of children with disabilities for educational services. Review special education plans at least annually. Participate in the Annual Plan. Budget-what needs more and what needs less. Classroom spaces. SEAC should receive copy of annual plan and documentation that has been reviewed. Compliance issues, Public notice of meetings, List committee and ways to contact. Every business meeting should have a period public comment. Must meet at least 4 times a year.

Reporting- consider not only annual reports

Best practice (Hank's opinion)-should reflect diversity, no prescribed number of members, SEAC not required to have by-laws, meeting times are for business, have an agenda and stick to it, encourage parental attendance, parents should not expect an answer to a personal issue, review indicator 8 data, attend school board meetings, attend quarterly SEAC meeting, public comment protocol, provide more than one way for public comment, listen to public comment, record the summary of comments and provide feedback, collaborative atmosphere, not a place for personal agendas, all meetings open to the public, 3 or more members considered a meeting if SEAC is discussed, meeting minutes must be recorded and preserved, notices must be posted in 2 public locations, must be posted 3 days prior, all materials available to members must be available to public,

Questions: How to address personal/individual issues? Follow the chain of command- Do not use personal identifiable information, how to record multiple comments but represented by one person

State SEAC meet elsewhere? (Hank will inquire about alternate locations for state SEAC meetings)
Chris Croll issued a formal invitation extended by school board member

Talking Points from Chris Croll-School Board

- The SB has been very busy since coming back from break. Here are some policy and committee updates that might be of interest to SEAC families.
- If you have questions about any of these items, please feel free to contact me via email
Chris.Croll@lcps.org.
- At our last meeting, the Board recognized **October as Disability History & Awareness Month.**

On the policy side of things...

- We adopted Policy 8220, Student Suspension from School. SEAC may not have had an opportunity to formally review this policy so once you do, please let me know if you have any concerns and we can bring this policy up for reconsideration by the School Board.
- We adopted and presented our 2020 Legislative Program. Of interest to SEAC parents are the items relating to fully funding the school counselor standards of quality/SOQ and performance-based assessments which would allow high performing divisions like ours to replace SOL's with other forms of assessments. Note that if your child has an IEP, that would still be honored during a performance-based assessment. Instead of testing, it may be project work or other assessments which would be locally scored and externally validated. Special thanks to Brenda Sheridan, Sterling SB representative for her leadership of the legislative and policy committee.

On deck...

- Adoption of Policy 5030 Assessment & Grading
- components in response to our special education parent concerns about grading floors...one of the clauses is that the lowest grade a student can earn is 50% so they still have an opportunity via reassessment to demonstrate mastery and pass the class

- This would go into effect next school year.
- Special thanks to Eric Hornberger, SB rep for the Ashburn district for his C&I committee leadership.

On consent for Tuesday's SB meeting is the adoption of Policy 5011 Unstructured Activity Time - mental and physical breaks for students K-12. Special thanks to Ian Serotkin, Blue Ridge SB candidate for his relentless advocacy on that policy.

- Discipline Committee is working on Policy 8030 Harassment and Discrimination of Students. I encourage you to jump on Board Docs and take a read through that policy which does call out students with disabilities as a protected class.
- SB issued an Equity Resolution to mirror the Superintendent's statement of Equity. Of note to SEAC Parents is we included the following language **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE Loudoun County School Board and its division superintendent publicly declare the condemnation of White supremacy, hate speech, hate crimes, and other hate-based acts of violence, and any instances of hate, discrimination, and violence based on race, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, appearance, and socio-economic status.**
- Special thanks to Brenda Sheridan, Chair of the Equity committee and also Zerell Johnson Welch, candidate for Catocin SB - my seat - for her participation on that committee and for advocating

for students with special needs. Our next meeting is at 5:30pm tomorrow night. These meetings are open to the public.

Hottest topics around town.....SY2020-2021 calendar (see 9/24 SB meeting) and Diversity Collections.

Other quick committee updates...

- *Communications & Outreach Committee*
The Communications department is conducting a communications audit on how effectively the division communicates with various stakeholder groups. Parent survey input. A report will be available by the end of October.
- Staff is developing a crisis communications practice document and the Comms committee, which I Chair, is writing a new policy so parents and staff know exactly what to expect when a serious or unusual situation occurs at one of our schools. If this subject interests you, join us at our next meeting at 5:30 p.m., October 7, 2019

Curriculum & Instruction

- In addition to policies I already mentioned, we are working on Policy 5070 Field Trips. Please review b/c I know those unstructured times are sometimes a challenge for our students with disabilities, food allergies, etc.
- LCPS Strategic Actions which are 5-year priorities for the division. We are reviewing PBL, personalized learning and performance assessment goals and metrics at 4:30 p.m., October 10, 2019;
- To hear all of the draft Strategic Actions, come to the SB work session on October 15, 2019 at 4pm.
- Human Resources and Talent Development committee
- Policy 6520 Non School Employment (teachers moonlighting on the side...may impact some of you if you hire teachers for tutoring or childcare)
- School Board Assistant job descriptions – if you are interested in applying...please see Board Docs for draft job descriptions,
- *School Business Partnership Executive Council*
The Council is busy planning for the annual “Job for a Day” event which takes place on November 13th.
- *Gifted Education Advisory Committee*
The GEAC committee met to review the Gifted Education draft strategic action items and I mention this b/c there is a focus in Strategic Actions to ensure that traditionally under-represented populations, including twice exceptional students, have access to gifted programs at all levels (EDGE program, FUTURA/SPECTRUM, honors classes, Academies, AP/DE classes and other gifted services). We are finally formalizing 2e programs and services which requires cross-

disciplinary collaboration between Curriculum & Instruction and Pupil Services.

- One informational item...

At the Sept 10 SB meeting...item 13.03...Dr. Jones shared updated seclusion and restraint numbers with the Board. I want to again publicly thanks to Dr. Jones and her team for bringing forward a level of transparency I'm not sure we have seen in the past. Having the new Seclusion and restraint policy in place certainly encouraged staff to report incidents accurately. The numbers are not good. We all want the number of incidents to be zero. But in order for us to work on this, we have to first document what's really going on in our schools. Thank you to the Pupil Services team for that transparency.

In closing, I'd like to share an email I received from a parent this week which underscores the importance of the work the LCPS classroom teachers and special ed staff do every day and to me it highlights how hard our kiddos work too.

"Dear Chris

My son was diagnosed early with dyslexia thanks to the wonderful educators at his elementary school. He is now a thriving 3rd grader, reading orally on grade level because he received the necessary multi-sensory phonetic based reading program early and is still getting services daily through his special education program teacher. This has been a valuable resource and makes me proud of LCPS and that the division is moving forward with understanding and learning more about Dyslexia."

We all know that in addition to staff support, that little boy worked very very hard to get to grade level reading. So I'm proud of him too and I'm proud of all of our kids who have challenges for how hard they work every day in school. Thank you.